

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUDAPE 03485 251216Z

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FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4535

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EEWT, MILI, HU
SUBJ: POSSIBLE SALE OF BEEF AND OTHER FOOD PRODUCTS TO U.S.
ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE

REF A: BUDAPEST 3092
B: STATE 245425

1. AMBASSADOR, ACCOMPANIED BY ECONOFF, CALLED ON PRESIDENT OF HUNGARIAN FOREIGN TRADE BANK SALUSINSKY OCT 21 TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE SALE OF HUNGARIAN BEEF TO DEFENSE SUPPLY AGENCY (DSA) FOR U.S. ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE.

2. AMBASSADOR SAID HE MERELY SEEKING ADVICE FROM SALUSINSKY AS TO WHETHER THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EARN HARD CURRENCY WOULD INTEREST HUNGARY, AND IF SO WITH WHOM EMBASSY SHOULD DISCUSS SUBJECT. AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED THAT HE SIMPLY RESPONDING TO REPEATED HUNGARIAN REQUESTS TO EXPAND HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN COMMERICAL RELATIONS DESPITE MFN PROBLEM; NOTED FREQUENT HUNGARIAN MENTION OF EC BEEF BAN; AND REFERRED TO RECENT COMPENSATING LEVY ON HUNGARIAN HAM EXPORTS TO EC COUNTRIES. AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED REQUIREMENT FOR USDA AND U.S. ARMY VETERINARY SERVICE INSPECTIONS, NOTED GENERAL SIZE OF MARKET IN QUESTION, DESCRIBED EUROPEAN PX NETWORK, AND INFORMED SALUSINSKY ABOUT SALES BY OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES TO DSA. AMBASSADOR ALSO POINTED OUT THAT PX'S CARRY NON-FOOD ITEMS, SUCH AS GIFTS, CHINA, CLOTHES, AND SPORTING

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GOODS.

3. SALUSINSKY'S EYES TWINKLED AT PROSPECT; HE OBVIOUSLY UNDERSTOOD ALL IMPLICATIONS OF THIS PROPOSAL, AND ADVISED THAT ECONOFF DISCUSS MATTER WITH ALBERT DEZSI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TERIMPEX, THE FOREIGN TRADING ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBLE FOR EXPORT AND IMPORT OF MEAT, POULTRY AND DAIRY PRODUCTS. SALUSINSKY UNDERTOOK TO PAVE WAY BY ADVISING DEZSI OF PENDING VISIT AND SUBJECT MATTER.

4. ECONOFF DISCUSSED WITH DEZSI OCT 24. AFTER PRESENTATION, DEZSI REPLIED THAT FROM 1948 TO 1956 HUNGARY HAD SHIPPED ANNUALLY ABOUT 20,000 HEAD OF LIVE CATTLE TO A WEST GERMAN FIRM FOR SUBSEQUENT SLAUGHTER AND SALE TO U.S. ARMED FORCES. TERIMPEX WELCOMED OPPORTUNITY, HE SAID, TO HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH DSA WITHOUT WEST GERMAN MIDDLE-MAN. ACCORDING TO DEZSI, VISITS BY USDA AND U.S. ARMY VETERINARY INSPECTORS TO HUNGARY WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE A PROBLEM. HE ASKED FOR SPECIFIC NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER OF RESPONSIBLE DSA PURCHASING OFFICER IN GERMANY.

5. EMBASSY WILL IN DUE COURSE PROVIDE TERIMPEX WITH THE INFORMATION IT HAS REQUESTED.

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